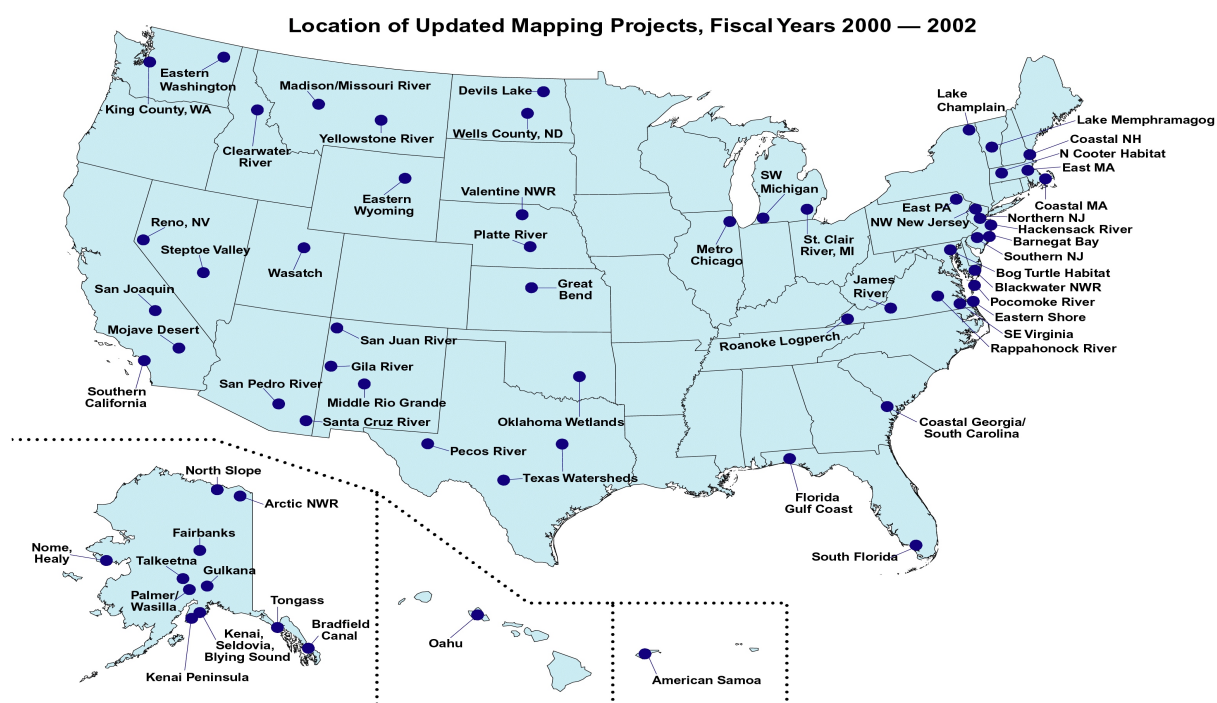


National Wetlands Inventory

2004 Program Overview

The *Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986* directs the Service to map our Nation's wetlands and deepwater habitats, and produce scientific information on their characteristics, extent and status. Since inception of the National Wetlands Inventory, the Service has completed digital wetlands maps for 42 percent of the nation primarily through conservation mapping partnerships. The Inventory provides Department bureaus, federal, state, and tribal governments and the public with wetlands data over the Internet that is widely used to help conserve and manage wetland resources. This work supports DOI's draft Resource Protection Goal of improving the health of watersheds, landscapes, and marine resources. Specifically, our mapping is important for understanding the status and trends of wetlands in the United States.

The Service continues to update maps and to make this information available over the Internet in conformance with the strategic plan for the Inventory that was completed in FY 2002. This plan is in line with the Department's draft Strategy to improve the scientific information base for resource management, technical assistance, and decision-making, as well as the Administration's Electronic Government initiatives to achieve operational efficiencies and enhance customer service. In FY 2003, the Service was developing more than 1,000 new and updated digital wetlands maps in key areas experiencing substantial change from development pressures and expanding population, as shown on the project map below. This strategic effort will help reduce our backlog of wetland maps where up-to-date wetland information is needed.



In FY 2004, the Service will begin updating an additional 300 digital wetland maps, and complete wetland trend reports for the southeastern United States and North Carolina. The Service will also continue to synthesize and electronically publish wetland and riparian habitat assessment reports on the Internet, such as the 2002 report *Geographically Isolated Wetlands*, to aid resource managers and the public in watershed planning, habitat conservation, and landscape management. The Service will continue to refine Internet delivery of seamless, updated digital data to keep pace with growing demand exceeding 1.5 million customer requests for wetlands information to use in resource mapping and management applications, plus online customer requests for 1 million custom wetland maps.

2002 Program Performance Accomplishments

The program focused its efforts on critical activities that support DOI's draft Resource Protection Goal of improving the health of watersheds, landscapes, and marine resources, by improving the information base, resource management and technical assistance. Major FY2002 Program accomplishments included:

- Implementing the strategic plan for the National Wetlands Inventory.
- Outsourcing the distribution of all hard-copy wetland maps through cooperative agreements with 29 States to improve local customer service.
- Completing and posting on the Internet updated wetlands maps for Connecticut, Georgia, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Virginia.
- Achieving complete digital wetlands coverage for North Dakota, South Dakota and Virginia.
- Publishing on the Internet *Geographically Isolated Wetlands, A Preliminary Assessment of Their Characteristics and Status in Selected Areas of the United States*, and 7 other analysis reports.
- Producing 5.7 million acres of wetland maps to reduce the wetland map backlog and provide up-to-date maps for use by federal, state, tribal, and local agencies, and private citizens.
- Digitizing and providing online 12.3 million acres of final wetland maps for customer use.
- Completing a cumulative total of 42% of the United States with online digital wetland maps.

2003 Performance Goal Estimates

The program will continue to focus its efforts on critical activities that support that support DOI's draft Resource Protection Goal of improving the health of watersheds, landscapes, and marine resources, by improving the information base, resource management and technical assistance. Major FY2003 Program accomplishments in support of this draft Resource Protection Goal will include:

- Beginning updating of nearly 300 digital wetlands maps in the lower 48 States, Alaska, and Hawaii.
- Completion of updated maps in Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Mexico, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, Vermont, Washington.
- Completion of digital wetlands coverage for Nebraska and South Carolina.
- Publication of the wetland status and trends report for Florida, and completion of other assessment reports for areas in Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, with an estimated 15 reports in developmental stages.
- Refinement of Interactive Wetlands Mapper tool to expedite on-line delivery of customized wetlands maps to users over the Internet.
- Digitizing and providing online an estimated 10 million acres of final wetland maps to reduce the backlog of wetland maps in need of updating.
- Completing a cumulative total of 43% of the United States with online digital wetland maps.

Justification of Program Changes:

Subactivity		2004 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
National Wetlands Inventory	\$(000)	4,723	-41
	FTE	38	-1

The FY 2004 Budget Request for the National Wetlands Inventory is \$4,723,000, a net program decrease of \$41,000 from the 2003 President's budget request level.

Travel Reduction (-\$15,000) - The request includes a \$15,000 reduction for travel expenses to be accomplished by curtailing unnecessary travel and relocation costs, as well as increased teleconferencing and use of central meeting locations.

The Service employs approximately 8,000 permanent full-time staff at approximately 700 field stations supported by seven regional offices and the Washington D.C. headquarters office. Many of the staff transfer from one field location to another or accept assignments at the Washington or regional offices to expand their professional experience or increase the level of responsibility in the organization. Service employees frequently travel to meetings such as professional association national, state or local chapter quarterly and annual meetings. The Service recognizes that there is significant benefit to be obtained by having employees work at different locations and at increasing levels of responsibility. The proposed decrease will not eliminate the opportunity for relocating, but will increase the time between moves.

Direct, mission related travel and travel associated with training will not be impacted by the proposed reduction. The Service will carefully evaluate policies and procedures related to attendance at meetings and conferences and will institute policies to limit redundancy in attendance.

IT Reduction (-\$26,000) - The Department is undertaking significant information technology reforms to improve the management of IT investments, to improve the security of systems and information, and to realize short and long-term efficiencies and savings. The Department is taking a corporate approach that will include consolidated purchases of hardware and software, and the review of select IT functions including centralized help desks, email support, web services, centralized network management, and coordination of training. The Service estimates a savings of \$6.6 million by participating in these Departmental efforts.

In addition, the Service will achieve an additional \$2 million in savings in other operational IT investments by centralizing management of geographic software, implementing desktop standards, consolidation of the Service messaging platform and other similar activities.

The National Wetlands Inventory's share of this reduction of \$26,000 reflects the anticipated savings from these cost cutting measures and reforms.